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INFO RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0400
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1215
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 8273
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI PRIORITY 0129

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 002802

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STATE FOR NEA/MAG (HARRIS), NEA/PPD (FERNANDEZ AND FINVER),
NEA/ARP; LONDON FOR ERELI; DUBAI FOR PELLETIER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/24/2016

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF EMIR FORESHADOWS RE-OPENING OF TUNISIAN
EMBASSY IN QATAR

REF: TUNIS 2639

Classified By: Ambassador Robert F. Godec for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Qatari Ambassador Saad Ben Nasser al-Hamidi told Ambassador that the Emir of Qatar, on a private visit to Tunisia, met one-on-one with President Ben Ali on November
¶22. The session was an effort to resolve differences, following recent frictions between Tunisia and Qatar over satellite TV channel al-Jazeera's recent coverage of domestic political issues in Tunisia. (Note: GOT ire over al-Jazeera's recent reporting on the GOT's campaign against the hijab, as well as an interview it aired with opposition activist Moncef Marzouki, resulted in a late-October GOT decision to close its embassy in Qatar -- reftel. End Note.)
The Qatari Ambassador was confident that these problems had been addressed and that an announcement would be forthcoming shortly from the Tunisian MFA about the re-opening of the Tunisian embassy in Qatar.

¶2. (SBU) Local media reported the visit, but only after the fact, which is a departure from normal practice for visits by heads of state. Without addressing the recent al-Jazeera-related tensions, press reports said only that the meeting represented an opportunity for the two countries to re-affirm their brotherly relations and that the leaders also discussed the current situation in the Middle East.
GODEC